

WASHINGTON – Following the U.S. Department of Justice's seven-count indictment of U.S. Senator Ted Stevens (R-Ala.) today, Congressman Mark Kirk (R-Ill.) renewed his call to kill pensions for members of Congress convicted of felonies.

"Today's indictment of Senator Stevens is another reminder that Congress has more work to do to block taxpayer-funded pensions for congressional felons," Congressman Kirk said. "Last year, Congress passed legislation banning pensions for approximately 11 felonies (PL 110-81), but that action did not go far enough. If convicted of making false claims, income tax evasion or a host of other felonies, a member of Congress who violated the public's trust can still live comfortably at the expense of the taxpayer. It's no coincidence that these crimes were left out of the legislation we voted on in 2007. We need to make it clear that if a member of Congress is convicted of any felony, he or she shouldn't get to retire on the taxpayer's dime."

According to the Congressional Research Service, over the past 50 years members of Congress have been convicted of at least 16 different felonies including:

- Receiving Illegal Gratuities and Bribery
- Conspiracy
- Travel Act Violations
- Conspiracy to Commit Mail Fraud
- Conspiracy to Commit Wire Fraud
- Extortion
- Embezzlement and Theft of Public Funds
- Income Tax Evasion

The National Taxpayers Union estimates that members convicted of felonies receive thousands of dollars in annual taxpayer-funded pensions, including:

- Dan Rostenkowski: \$125,000
- Duke Cunningham: \$64,000
- James Traficant: \$40,000
- Bob Ney: \$29,000

In January of 2007, Congressman Kirk introduced the Congressional Integrity and Pension Forfeiture Act of 2007 (H.R. 14) which detailed 21 felonies that, if a member of Congress was found guilty of, would result in a forfeiture of their pension. The full list includes the following felonies:

Offenses in Kirk Bill H.R. 14:
Congressional Integrity and Pension Forfeiture Act
Total: 21

- bribery of public officials and witness (18 USC 201)*
- officers and employees acting as foreign principals (18 USC 219)*
- conspiracy to commit offense or to defraud the United States (18 USC 371)*
- perjury or the subornation of perjury*
- interstate and foreign travel or transportation in aid of racketeering enterprises (18 USC 1952 and 1962)*
- fraud by wire, radio, or television (18 USC 1343)*
- frauds and swindles (18 USC 1341)
- influencing or injuring officer or juror (18 USC 1503)
- compensation to Members of Congress, officers, and others in matters affecting the Government (18 USC 203)

- practice in United States Court of Federal Claims or the United States Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit by Members of Congress (18 USC 204)
- conspiracy to defraud the Government with respect to claims (18 USC 286)
- false, fictitious or fraudulent claims (18 USC 287)
- expenditures to influence voting (18 USC 597)
- promise of appointment by candidate (18 USC 599)
- solicitation of political contributions (18 USC 602)
- intimidation to secure political contributions (18 USC 606)
- place of solicitation (18 USC 607)
- public money, property or records (18 USC 641)
- statements or entries generally (18 USC 1001)
- interference with commerce by threats or violence (18 USC 1951)
- attempt to evade or defeat tax (Section 7201 of the IRS Code of 1986)

*Passed in PL 110-81